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**Directors of Veterinary Services in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan:  
Robert Starmer Audas (Assistant Director, 1925-1932) 1909-1935**

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**Abstract**

Robert Starmer Audas served in Sudan in various capacities with several military and civil entities between 1909 and 1935. Along with Claud Percy Fisher (1918-1944), the tenth of the twelve veterinarians who served as Directors of Veterinary Services, and with 26 years of residence, he was the longest serving soldier of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps in the country. Audas worked in several of the more remote provinces in the early years of his time in Sudan. His "home", however, was Darfur where he worked as Veterinary Inspector during two main periods. The first of these was before, and the other after his stint in Khartoum as Assistant Director of Veterinary Services until that post was abolished. In the context of RAVC officers in Sudan Audas was somewhat unusual. He was not retransferred to the British from the Egyptian Army on the outbreak of World War I. He was not awarded either of the two Turkish Orders of the Osmanieh or Medjidie although he did achieve the Order of the Nile, first in the Fourth Class then later in the Third. He was awarded the Military Cross in the King's New Year Honours in 1919 along with several hundred others but without a particular citation. He contrived to see a lot of military action in "punitive" expeditions against both the "negroes" of southern Sudan and the Arabs in the west and garnered five clasps (only one other British officer achieved as many) to his Khedive's Sudan Medal between 1910 and 1921. In the British Army he was never promoted from Captain but in the Egyptian Army progressed from Bimbashi to Kaimakan with the honorary title of Bey. For just over one year in 1926 and 1927 he carried the rank of Major whilst serving as the Principal Veterinary Officer of the Sudan Defence Force. After retirement in 1935 he was again in Sudan for six months at the end of 1936 and beginning of 1937 on special (but publicly unspecified) duties. During this period, however, he was in Darfur on a private hunting trip with a former British Army officer with whom he had a long friendship. He appears to have done little of note after this period and spent a quiet period in retirement. His health deteriorated during the 1960s and he was almost blind when he died in 1966.

**Keywords**

Royal Army Veterinary Corps; Darfur Province; Military campaigns; Army transport; Horse breeding

**Introduction**

In the final 20 years of the 19th Century the Sudanese, under a charismatic religious leader, rebelled against the Egyptians who were governing the country. The British General Gordon, sent to assist the Egyptians, was besieged in Khartoum. A British relief force fought its way up the River Nile in 1884/1885 but Gordon was killed before it arrived. Pressure from the British public resulted in a second expedition being sent to recapture the Sudan in 1898. This reconquest of the country culminated in the Battle of Omdurman in September 1898. Unrest by the Sudanese continued, however, and resulted in continued British presence. The Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, nominally a joint administration by the two countries but essentially a British enterprise, was established as a Condominium shortly afterwards. Continuing unrest and civil disturbance by the Sudanese necessitated a large military presence. Maintenance of law and order required enormous numbers of cavalry and transport animals (horses, mules, donkeys and camels) to govern and control the turbulent population. Health care of these animals was a major consideration and a fledgling veterinary service was established. In all, 12 people served as Principal Veterinary Officers (to 1910) or as Directors of Veterinary Services (from 1910 to 1956) in the 55-year period from the setting up of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan in 1901 to the achievement of independence by the Republic of Sudan on 1 January 1956. During the early years the veterinarians were military officers who were seconded, usually for short periods, from the British to the Egyptian Army which in turn employed them directly or seconded them to the Sudan. Robert Starmer Audas served as Assistant Director for seven years in the period 1925 to 1932.

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**Early life****1884-1905**

Robert Starmer Audas was born at 12 Trinity Square, Carr Lane, in Hull on 23 January 1884 [1]. He was the son of Thomas Audas, a Dental Surgeon Duly Registered and his wife Emma Alice (née Hickling). A photograph of Robert, taken probably in 1886 when he was two years old shows him with a mass of curly hair and dressed in a child's costume of the time (Figure 1).

The Audas family was living at 18 Regency Terrace, Carr Lane, Hull in the East Riding of Yorkshire in 1891. Robert's father was aged 39, his mother 34, he was the third son of his parents, 6 years old and a Scholar. Also in the household were a younger brother and sister, a Nurse and a Cook. The Audas house in 1901 was situated at 46 Carr Lane but it almost certainly the same as in 1891 following a renumbering exercise. The family now comprised Mr and Mrs Audas, one older brother, Robert aged 17, younger brother Frederick, younger sister Dorothy, Mrs Audas' father who was a Widower aged 79 and working on his own account as an Agent in Sanitary Goods, and two female servants<sup>1</sup>.

Following a course of study at the Royal Veterinary College in London he was admitted to the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons as a Member (MRCVS) on 14 July 1905. He showed an early tendency to be a writer when shortly afterwards he published a short article describing how he and three companions out on a walk on the coast came across and killed a Rorqual whale over 20 feet long and weighing two tons (2036 kg). They accomplished this admittedly unusual feat by bashing its brains out with an axe and then stripping the jaw bones to keep as souvenirs [2].



**Figure 1:** Robert Starmer Audas aged about two in 1886 (original photograph by Turner & Drink water, Anlaby Road, Hull; courtesy of Simon Robinson)

**South Africa****1906-1909**

Audas was commissioned into the Army Veterinary Corps as a Subaltern on 3 February 1906 [3]:

## ARMY VETERINARY DEPARTMENT.

The undermentioned Gentlemen to be Lieutenants.

Dated 3rd February, 1906:— Robert Starmer Audas, in succession to Lieutenant-Colonel C. E. Nuthall, promoted.

He was shortly posted to South Africa where he served with the Army Veterinary Corps at Roberts Heights near Pretoria in Transvaal from November 1907 to October 1909. This large military establishment was named after Field Marshall Lord Roberts and was the Headquarters of the British Army in South Africa. Attached to the 3rd (King's Own) Hussars in South Africa, Lieutenant Audas won Army Middleweight and Heavyweight boxing championships and was captain of a regimental team [4].

**Sudan****1909-1912**

After leaving South Africa in mid-1909 Audas was attached to the Egyptian Army [5] and arrived in Sudan on 6 October of that year. In Sudan, whilst an officer of the Army Veterinary Corps, he first served with the Camel Corps in Kordofan (Table 1). At a very early stage of his career in Sudan Audas bought a horse, the foal of a roan mare owned by a Messeriya Arab, at a horse fair in El Obeid. This animal he named Gamil (lovely or pretty in Arabic) and it was his mount of choice, carrying him for thousands of miles on patrols and treks, until he left Sudan 26 years later. In addition to being a work horse Gamil had a good turn of speed as Audas retired to England with at least two pieces of silverware won with the horse in Khartoum in 1919 (when the horse was 10 years old) and in Nyala in 1922 when the animal was 13 years old (Figure 2). He also carried with him a piece of the horse's anatomy in the form of a hoof which was later mounted in silver to serve as an ink well. An attempt to have a short biography of Gamil published after his retirement in 1935 appears to have come to nought (Appendix A [7])<sup>2</sup>.

Audas was in action for the first time with the Camel Corps unit during the Rahad Patrol of 10-19 November 1910. Another action at this time was the Dilling Patrol of 27 November to 19 December 1910. These actions in the mountains of South Kordofan were mounted to subdue the rebellious Mek (King) Gedeil of the Jebel TagoiNuba. For his service at one or both of these Kordofan actions he was awarded the Khedive's Sudan Medal 1910-1921 – authorised by a Special Army Order of 25 January 1912 – with the Clasp for Southern Kordofan (Table 2; Figure 3) [8]. The Southern Kordofan Clasp – the second to be awarded to the Medal -- is rare as only 19 were awarded to British



**Figure 2:** Tankard won in Khartoum and cup won in Nyala by Audas' horse Gamil

<sup>1</sup>There is no Carr Lane in Hull in 2018.

<sup>2</sup>Some sources say the horse was 16 months old when bought by Audas. In his account, however, he says Gamil "first saw the light of day at the end of the rains in 1907" (Appendix A). Audas arrived in Sudan in November 1909, the rains probably ended in September, so the horse must have been at least 26 months old when bought.

Date	Appointment	Rank and name	Location	Notes
06-Oct-09			Kordofan	With Camel Corps
01-Dec-12				Transfer from Camel Corps
01-Mar-14	Veterinary Inspector	El Bimbashi R S Audas	Kordofan Province	
01-Jul-14	Veterinary Inspector	El Bimbashi R S Audas	El Obeid	
01-Jan-16	Veterinary Inspector	El Bimbashi R S Audas	Red Sea Province	
01-Nov-16	Veterinary Inspector	El Bimbashi R S Audas	Due from leave 22.11.1916	On medical grounds
01-Jan-18	Veterinary Inspector	El Bimbashi R S Audas MC	Darfur Province	
01-Jan-19	Veterinary Inspector	El Kaimakan R S Audas Bey MC 4 Nile	Darfur Province	
01-Apr-20	Veterinary Inspector	El Kaimakan R S Audas Bey MC 4 Nile	Upper Nile	
01-Apr-23	Veterinary Inspector	(Captain) El Kaimakan R S Audas Bey MC 4 Nile	Darfur Province	
01-Apr-24	Veterinary Inspector	(Captain) El Kaimakan R S Audas Bey MC 4 Nile	Darfur Province	For Khartoum
01-Jul-25	Assistant Director	(Captain) El Kaimakan R S Audas Bey MC 4 Nile	Khartoum	
01-Jan-27	Assistant Director	(Captain) El Kaimakan R S Audas Bey MC 4 Nile	Kordofan and Darfur	<i>On Tour of Duty</i>
01-Jul-27	Assistant Director	(Captain) El Kaimakan R S Audas Bey MC 4 Nile	Khartoum	For leave
01-Oct-27	Assistant Director	(Captain) El Kaimakan R S Audas Bey MC 4 Nile	Khartoum	Due from leave 15 October
01-Jan-28	Assistant Director	(Captain) El Kaimakan R S Audas Bey MC 4 Nile	Khartoum	<i>T.D. Darfur Province</i>
01-Jul-28	Assistant Director	El Kaimakan R S Audas Bey MC 4 Nile	Khartoum	For leave
01-Jul-29	Assistant Director	El Kaimakan R S Audas Bey MC 4 Nile	Khartoum	For leave
01-Oct-29	Assistant Director	El Kaimakan R S Audas Bey MC 4 Nile	Khartoum	Due from leave 12 November
01-Jul-30	Assistant Director	El Kaimakan R S Audas Bey MC 4 Nile	Khartoum	Due from leave 12 July
01-Oct-30	Assistant Director	El Kaimakan R S Audas Bey MC 4 Nile	Khartoum	
01-Jan-31	Assistant Director	El Kaimakan R S Audas Bey MC, MRCVS, 4 Nile	Khartoum	
01-Apr-31	Assistant Director	Captain R S Audas Bey MC, MRCVS, 4 Nile	Khartoum	For leave
01-Jul-31	Assistant Director	Captain R S Audas Bey MC, MRCVS, 3 Nile	Khartoum	Due from leave 12 July
01-Jan-32	Assistant Director	Captain R S Audas Bey MC, MRCVS, 3 Nile	Khartoum	<i>T.D. Darfur</i>
01-Apr-32	Veterinary Inspector	Captain R S Audas MC, MRCVS, 3 Nile	Khartoum	For leave April
01-Jul-32	Veterinary Inspector	Captain R S Audas MC, MRCVS, 3 Nile	Khartoum	Due from leave 13 July
01-Oct-32	Veterinary Inspector	Captain R S Audas MC, MRCVS, 3 Nile	Khartoum	<i>For Darfur Province</i>
01-Jan-33	Veterinary Inspector	Captain R S Audas MC, MRCVS, 3 Nile	Darfur Province	
01-Apr-33	Veterinary Inspector	Captain R S Audas MC, MRCVS, 3 Nile	Darfur Province	For leave 26 June
01-Jul-33	Veterinary Inspector	Captain R S Audas MC, MRCVS, 3 Nile	Darfur Province	For leave 23 July
01-Oct-33	Veterinary Inspector	Captain R S Audas MC, MRCVS, 3 Nile	Darfur Province	Due from leave 29 October
01-Jan-34	Veterinary Inspector	Captain R S Audas MC, MRCVS, 3 Nile	Darfur Province	
01-Apr-34	Veterinary Inspector	Captain R S Audas MC, MRCVS, 3 Nile	Darfur Province	
01-Jul-34	Veterinary Inspector	Captain R S Audas MC, MRCVS, 3 Nile	Darfur Province	For leave 8 July
01-Oct-34	Veterinary Inspector	Captain R S Audas MC, MRCVS, 3 Nile	Darfur Province	Due from leave 13 November
01-Jan-35	Veterinary Inspector	Captain R S Audas MC, MRCVS, 3 Nile	Darfur Province	Retiring
				arrived London 22 July 1935

**Source:** [6]

**Table 1:** Outline of the career of Robert StarmerAudas in Sudan, 1909-1935

officers (one other of which was to Frederick Ulysses Carr who is the subject of another article in this series [9]<sup>3</sup>).

Having completed the statutory five years service as a Lieutenant the standard promotion to Captain took place [10,11]:

ARMY VETERINARY SERVICE....:

*Army Veterinary Corps*, The under mentioned Lieutenants to be Captains. Dated 3<sup>rd</sup> February, 1911:-Robert S Audas (seconded for service with the Egyptian Army).

#### 1912-1915

The official return of staff for 1 March 1914 says that Audas

arrived in Sudan on 1 August 1912 [6]. This was, however, the date he was transferred from the Camel Corps to the Sudan Veterinary Service.

From 1912 to the end of 1915 Captain Audas was employed as a Veterinary Inspector, based in El Obeid, the administrative capital of Kordofan Province. He did, however, make short visits to other provinces and notably Blue Nile, for example from 1-3 January 1913, 2-5 May 1913 and 27 July to 3 August 1915 and Kassala from 9 August to 19 November 1915. Throughout this period and indeed up to 1918 his local designation was *Bimbashi*. In the Turkish and Egyptian armies of the period this rank was equivalent to the British

<sup>3</sup>These medals were offered at auction on 18 May 2011 with an estimated bid of £3,500- £4,000 and were sold for £5,500. The Order of the Nile appears to be a Fifth Class Breast Badge: the Fourth Class Medal was sold later by Rita Holtby (who was his niece, the daughter of sister Dorothy). Audas' award of Third Class would have entitled him to wear a badge on a ribbon around his neck. Audas' Khedive's Sudan Medal is unusual in having five clasps (16 were awarded in all although because Nyala and Darfur 1921 were mutually exclusive only 15 could be awarded to any one person). It is believed only one other British officer gained five clasps The Order of the Nile Fourth Class is also referred to as Officer and Third Class as Commander

Date	Action/location	Award	Notes
1910	Southern Kordofan	Khedive's Sudan Medal 1910-1921; Clasp Southern Kordofan	
1916	Darfur	Mentioned in Despatches	Operations against Sultan Ali Dinar
1916	Darfur	Khedive's Medal ; Clasp Nyala 1916	Operations against Sultan Ali Dinar
01-Jan-17		Military Cross	No individual citation
February-June 1917	Mor District, Upper Nile	Khedive's Medal; Clasp Lau Nuer	Staff Officer, Transport
November 1917-1918		Khedive's Medal; Clasp Nyima 1917-1918	
05-Apr-19		Order of the Nile, 4th Class	
Sep-21	Nyala, Southern Darfur	Khedive's Medal: Clasp Nyala	
17-Jan-23		British War Medal	For "Service in Soudan"
08-Jun-32		Order of the Nile, 3rd Class	

**Source:** Various as indicated in relevant references throughout this paper

**Table 2:** Chronology of campaign and gallantry awards and foreign honours of Robert Starmer Audas



**Figure 3:** Medal collection of Robert Starmer Audas

(Military Cross; British War Medal 1914-20; Order of the Nile, 5th Class breast badge; Khedive's Sudan Medal 1910-21 with five clasps [S. Kordofan 1910, Darfur 1916, Lau Nuer, Nyima 1917-1918, Nyala,])

one of Major but it was usual to accord seconded British officers a local rank one grade higher than their substantive one.

Paradoxically he was still listed in the Dublin Directory in 1914 although his name was now in italic font and his address given as "e.a." (Egyptian Army) [12].

#### 1916-1917

From early in 1916 and up to 15 January 1917 his official posting was Red Sea Province but he had sick leave during this period and was due back on duty on 26 November 1916. He was in Darfur, however, for some time between 16 March and 23 November 1916 in support of the military operations against the Sultan Ali Dinar who had come out in open revolt against the Anglo-Egyptian authorities. He was responsible for looking after the hundreds of animals, mostly camels, carrying supplies to the fighting front. His services were obviously well received as he was Mentioned in Despatches by General Wingate and added a second Clasp "Nyala 1916" (under Special Army Order dated 8 September 1916) to his Khedive's campaign medal [13]:

The following Despatch has been received by the Secretary of State for War from General Sir Reginald Wingate, G.C.B., Sirdar and Governor-General of the Sudan: -

Khartoum,  
8th August, 1916.

SIR,-I have the honour to forward for the information of the Secretary of State for War my Despatch on the military operations in Darfur, together with a brief report on the services of the Egyptian Army and the Sudan Administration since the outbreak of war in Europe.

~ ~ ~

The great bulk of the transport service and all transport with the troops in Darfur, however, was carried out by camel; and very great credit is due to Major S. E. H. Giles, Army Service Corps, and his subordinates as well as to Major J. J. B. Tapley, D.S.O., and Captain R. S. Audas, Army Veterinary Corps, whose powers of organisation and improvisation were put to a high test.

~ ~ ~

Finally, I have the honour to append a list of names of officers, officials and others whose work in connection with military operations and the situation in the Sudan created by the war is deserving of special notice and commendation (i.e. Mention in Despatches).

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your Obedient Servant,

REGINALD WINGATE, General,

Sirdar and Governor-General of the Sudan.

No. 1.

Darfur Operations

*Lines of Communication*

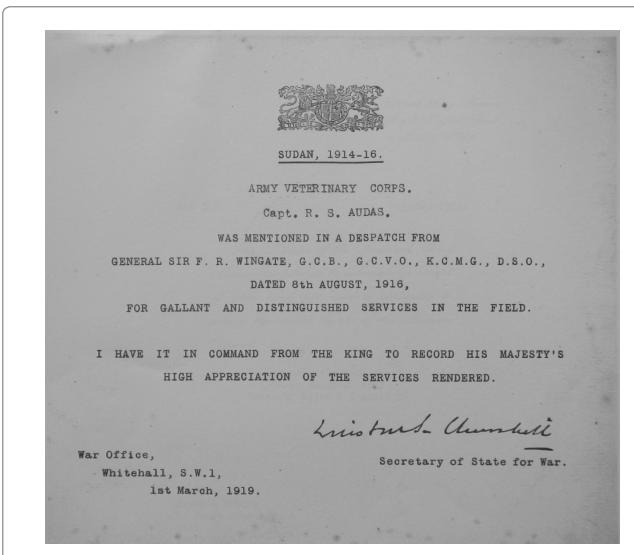
Audas, Capt. A., Army Veterinary Corps.

Shortly afterwards it was announced in the London Gazette that, amongst several hundred others and in the King's New Year Honours, he was to be awarded the Military Cross [14,15]. There is no individual citation for this award and he is not (yet) listed in the historical awards lists of the Ministry of Defence. Some two and a half years later, however, he received a note from Winston S Churchill, Secretary of State for War, who had been commanded by His Majesty the King to express his high appreciation for Audas Mention in Despatches for Gallant and Distinguished Service in the Field (Figure 4).

From 11 February to 16 June 1917 he was in Upper Nile as Staff Officer, Transport and took part in the patrol to suppress the Lau Nuer of that Province. This tribe was continually raiding the Dinka people who inhabited Bor district of Mongalla. Subsequent to this action, the Clasp "Lau Nuer" (again under Special Army Order dated 8 September 1916) was added to his Khedive's Medal.

#### 1917-1920

Officially posted in Darfur in 1917 and 1918 (see Table 1) he was in Kordofan from 7 July until 31 December 1917. His MOD service document says "Sudan 1917, operations against the..." (with a blank as indicated). The operations referred to were in the Nyima Hills in Nuba Mountains Province. These activities took place because the Nuba tribe of Jebel Sultan in the Nyima Hills were becoming truculent, refusing to pay their taxes and harbouring criminals. The local people indicated to the authorities that Agabria wad Ahauga, the leader of



**Figure 4:** Appreciation card signed by Winston Churchill recognizing Audas' Mention in Despatches for his service in Darfur in 1916

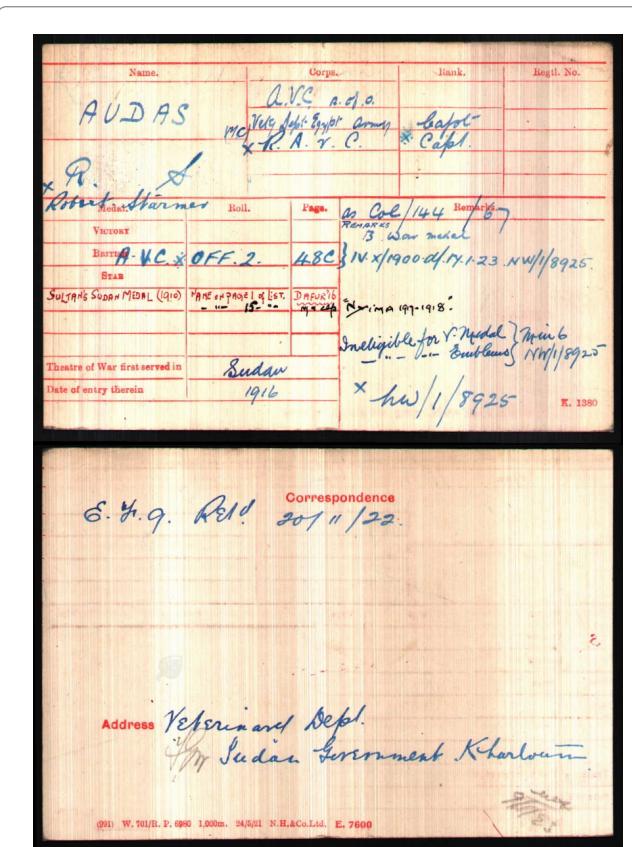
one faction, was spoiling for a confrontation with the Government. It very soon obliged him. A large force was sent out in November 1917 and after considerable fighting Agabria and the *kujurkilkun* (chief medicine man) were captured, tried and hanged. Audas now added the Clasp "Nyima Hills 1917-18" (under Special Army Order dated 22 January 1919) to his Khedive's Medal, one of 52 awarded to British officers and 15 to other ranks [8].

From 1 January 1918 until 6 November 1918 according to his MOD record he was in Kordofan and then there again from 21 November until 31 December. He was not, however, physically there all the time and his service record is at odds with Sudan government records which have him in Darfur in January 1918 (see Table 1). He was certainly in Darfur in early March 1918 when he made the first (European) ascent of Jebel Marra, reaching the top on 13 March. He did this climb in the company of J. A. Gillan, then an Inspector in the Sudan Political Service in Nyala, and Captain H. F. C. Hobbs of the West Yorkshire Regiment [16]<sup>4</sup>. Audas was eventually awarded the British War Medal (Figure 5) for his service in the military during World War I but it was not actually despatched to him until 21 January 1923. There was a note on one source indicating that Audas was on the Reserve of Officers<sup>5</sup>.

By 1 January 1919 Veterinary Inspector R. S.Audas had been promoted locally to the rank of *Kaimakan* which also entitled him to the honorary title of *Bey*<sup>6</sup>. The Sudan Quarterly List for 1 January 1919 also indicates he has the Fourth Class of the Order of the Nile but this award was not promulgated until three months later [17,18]:

Whitehall, April 5, 1919.

The KING has been pleased to give and grant unto the under-mentioned Officers His Majesty's Royal licence and authority to wear the Insignia of the Order of the Nile of the Classes indicated against their respective names, which Decorations have been conferred upon



**Figure 5:** Medal Index Card of Robert Starmer Audas

them by His Highness the Sultan of Egypt in recognition of valuable services rendered by them :-

#### *Fourth Class.*

Captain Robert Starmer Audas, M.C., Royal Army Veterinary Corps.

Once again nominally posted in Darfur – where it is known he was present from 1 January to 19 July 1919 – he was in Kordofan for five weeks from 20 July until 27 August 1919. He was then back in Darfur until 5 October 1919 when he left the service of the British Army[20]:

## ARMY VETERINARY SERVICE.

E.A.V.S.— Capt. R. S. Audas, M.C., retires on ret. pay. 6th Oct. 1919.

Audas left the British Army but not the Sudan. His services were taken up by the Egyptian Government and he continued his work in the Sudan Veterinary Service. Audas' literary tendencies came to the fore again at this time. Unlike his earlier description of wantonly killing a whale he now writes an article describing the hunting of Scimitar-horned Oryx (*Oryx dammah*) by local tribes and makes a plea for regulated hunting of this beautiful antelope [21]. One of his hobbies was painting water colours of which an example is the Oryx (Figure 6). Like many other expatriates in Sudan, however, he was

<sup>4</sup>Gillan does not refer to Audas in his account of Jebel Marra but there is no doubt of his presences as there are at least three photographs in the Sudan Archives at Durham providing testament to this (SAD.A81/149, SAD.A81/170-173, SAD.12/3/80). Hobbs received the Khedive's Sudan Medal 1910 with Clasps for Darfur 1916 and El Fasher for the campaign against Ali Dinar although he was only involved in "Minor Operations" [12]. Hobbs had previously served with the 9th Sudanese Regiment in the Turkana Patrol in Kenya for which he received the Africa General Service Medal with Clasp "East Africa 1915". He also received the British War Medal but not the Victory Medal (see next Footnote with regard to conditions for these medals).

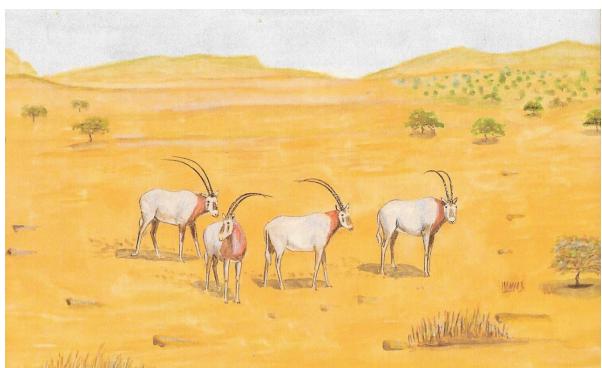
<sup>5</sup>Audax' Medal Index Card states he was ineligible for the Victory Medal [19]. To qualify for the Victory Medal recipients had to be mobilized for war service in the United Kingdom or the British Empire, in any service, and to have entered a theatre of war between 5 August 1914 and 11 November 1918. Officers and men of the British Army, including Dominion and Colonial forces, were required to have either entered an active theatre of war or to have left the United Kingdom for service overseas between 5 August 1914 and 11 November 1918, and to have completed 28 days mobilized service.

<sup>6</sup>In the Turkish and Egyptian military the title *Kaimakan* was equivalent to a British Lieutenant Colonel: British officers in the Egyptian army were invariably given ranks higher than their substantive British ones. *Rey* is a title roughly equivalent to "Sir" in the English hierarchy and below the title *Pasha* ("Lord").

an avid big (and little) game hunter and he had a large collection of trophies. Some of these he took home when he retired, including a lion skull (Figure 7), lion skin cushions and a military drum of the 12th Sudanese Battalion which was later donated to the National Army Museum by his granddaughter (Figure 8). His living relatives have a collection of game artefacts he also took home including small horns and teeth of various species including one of an elephant (Simon Robinson, Personal Communication, 20 February 2018). In 1920 he became a Fellow of the Zoological Society (of London) when his UK home address was Trematon, Cardigan Road, Bridlington, Yorkshire.

### 1920-1923

El Kaimakan R. S. Audas was an Inspector in the Veterinary Department in Upper Nile Province from 1920 to 1923. Yet, as for earlier postings, he was not there all the time. In September 1921, Abdullahi el Suheina declared himself to be the Prophet Isa and as such gathered a large following of Masalat, Baggara and Fellata tribesmen in Southern Darfur. It soon became clear that he was going to attack Nyala, the District headquarters where, in addition to the District Commissioner and civil administration staff there were 37 police. Some 64 Mounted Infantry of the Western Arab Corps left El Fasher for Nyala on 23 September where they arrived after a forced march on 25 September. These were followed by a second force of 52 men with two machine guns. Abdullahi began his attack

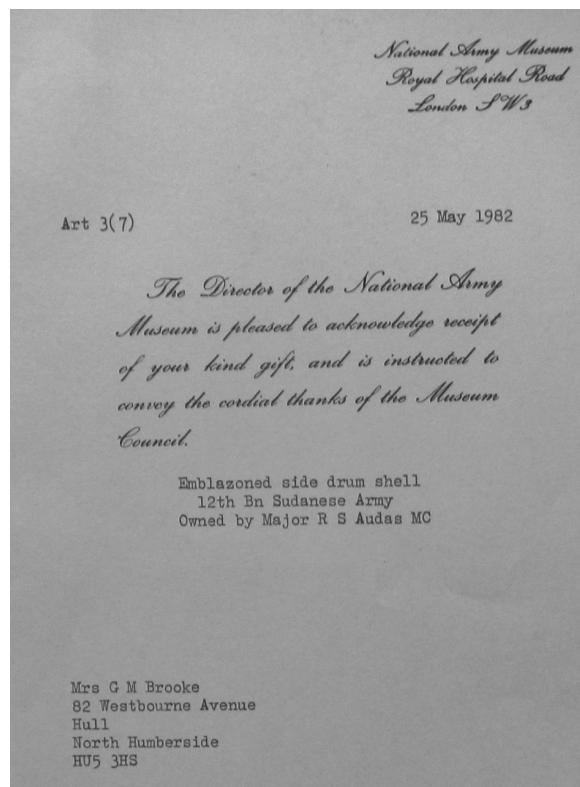


**Figure 6:** Water colour of Scimitar-horned Oryx painted by Audas (courtesy of Simon Robinson)



**Figure 7:** Skull of a lion killed by Audas in Darfur and taken back to England

<sup>7</sup>Two Clasps, "Nyala" and "Darfur 1921" were issued for events in Darfur at this time but no person was allowed to be awarded more than one. The Nyala Clasp was issued to far fewer personnel than the one for Darfur 1921. Captain Harry Chown, RAVC, the assistant vet in El Fasher was killed in the Nyala incident, being one of only two vets who died in the Sudan, the other person dying of disease.



**Figure 8:** Note of acknowledgement from National Army Museum for donation of drum of 12th Sudanese battalion

in the morning of 26 September with an estimated 5,000 men. The defenders fought gallantly but were overrun. Eventually, however, the garrison took the enemy in the rear and drove them out. Abdullahi, who believed himself invulnerable to bullets, was killed in the fighting. Audas garnered his fifth Clasp "Nyala" for this engagement<sup>7</sup>. It can undoubtedly be said of Audas that he went looking for trouble!

Audas, as all expatriate personnel in Sudan, continued to benefit every year from long leaves in the United Kingdom. On 2 November 1922, for example, Captain R Audas a Civil servant aged 38, of Trematon, Cardigan Road, Bridlington, left London bound for Port Sudan travelling First Class on board the SS Llanstephan Castle [21]. On some of these leaves he "rode to hounds", hunting foxes with the Middleton East pack, or judged Hunter classes at local agricultural shows.

### 1923-1932

Posted to Darfur early in 1923, Audas was there until the middle of 1924 as Inspector in the Veterinary Department. He was then transferred to Khartoum in mid 1924 where he was to become Assistant Director of Veterinary Services. One can imagine that he went kicking and screaming in protest at the restrictions this exalted position, with its rounds of formal dinners and other social activities, must have imposed on his preferred life style. Assistant Director Captain El Kaimakan R. S. Audas Bey M.C., 4th Class Order of the Nile, was mainly in Khartoum during 1925, 1926 and 1927. On 6 December 1926 he was granted the Local Rank of Major whilst serving with the Sudan Defence Force as Principal Veterinary Officer. During this tenure he was based in Kordofan and Darfur but had again been on home leave as he travelled First Class from his English address at Trematon, 18 Cardigan Road, Bridlington (Figure 9) as a Sudan Government Servant aged 43 on the SS Herefordshire of the

Bibby Line on 30 September 1927 bound for Port Sudan [22]. He relinquished his Sudan Defence Force appointment on 15 December 1927, returned to Khartoum and was again placed on the Reserve List of the British Army. Audas was discharged from the Army on 23 January 1929, having attained the age for cessation of liability.

Undoubtedly he returned to Darfur as often as possible. He was there, for example, early in 1925 when he attended horseshows with C. G. Dupuis, then Deputy Governor of Darfur at Sibdu (Rizayqat tribe), Buram (Habbaniyah tribe), Idd el Ghanem and Nyala. [23]. He was again in Darfur at the beginning of 1927 and then once more early in 1928. In February 1929 he was back in Darfur. His interest in the fauna and flora and the natural environment of Darfur in particular is evident in his submission to the British Museum (Natural History) of a bee he had collected. Although this was not a new species it was one of very few specimens from Sudan and was collected at Dissa in Northern Darfur [24]:

*Seladonia lucidipennis* (Smith 1853): *Halictus (Seladonia) dissensis* COCKERELL, 1945 : 353, FFF. Holotype FFF : Sudan, Dissa, 24.ii.1929, R.S. Audas Bey leg., C.10998 (BMNH, London). Examined.

Audas continued as Deputy Director until early 1932 when he was on a tour of Darfur. In April 1932 he reverted to the position of Veterinary Inspector and then left on leave. He arrived back from leave on 13 July but remained on duty in Khartoum until later in the year. By 1 January 1933 he was back in Darfur as Veterinary Inspector and remained there until he retired from Government service in 1935. It is possible - indeed it is probable - that Audas used his position as Assistant Director in Khartoum to promote a pet project. This was a scheme for breeding horses largely driven by Audas and centred on Nyala, the provincial administrative centre, which was instituted in Southern Darfur (and to a lesser extent in Kordofan) in 1925. It was then estimated that about 80 per cent of national horse numbers were located in Southern Darfur and in nearby Southern Kordofan [25,26]. Imported Arab and English Thoroughbred stallions were crossed with the local Kordofani horse, also known as the Western Sudan pony, in an attempt to up-grade them to meet the needs of the military and the administrative personnel of the country [27,28]. The scheme was in operation with some gaps and more policy changes for over 50 years. At least during the latter part of this period the scheme had little effect on the horse population in general but was used to some extent to maintain police horses at an acceptable standard.

Audas provided a description of the scheme in a typescript, written probably in the early 1930s (Appendix B [29]). He later published a formal version of this document in the Journal of the Arab Horse Society but allowed Charles Dupuis, Governor of Darfur at the time the paper was written, to be first author [30]<sup>8</sup>.

### 1932-1935

In 1932 he reverted to the role of Inspector, Veterinary Department, Khartoum but received an up-grade from Fourth to Third Class of the Order of the Nile [31]:

Whitehall, June 8, 1932.

The KING has been pleased to give and grant unto the under-mentioned gentlemen His Majesty's Royal licence and authority to wear Decorations conferred upon them by His Majesty the King of Egypt, in recognition of valuable service rendered by them while in the employment of the Sudan Government:-

ORDER OF THE NILE.

Insignia of the Third Class.

Captain Robert Starmer Audas, M.C.

Robert Audas had proceeded on leave in 1932 earlier in the year than usual and arrived in London on 22 April aboard the SS Strathnaver from Port Sudan and, described as a Civil Servant aged 48 resident in Sudan gave his next destination as the Royal Societies Club, Wellington House, Buckingham Gate [32]. On his return to Sudan he was again in Darfur as an Inspector in the Veterinary Department from 1933 to 1935. He was based in El Fasher, the capital of Darfur Province, lived in a 3-room mud hut and slept on the roof. Although this was the regional capital there was only a small number of expatriates in residence. Work dominated the lifestyle and conversation at the "Club" was dominated by work related themes. There was some social life, however, with opportunities to play polo, hunt birds with the aid of horse and dog and get dressed up for formal receptions of visiting dignitaries from Khartoum or even overseas. Audas was made responsible for a herd of 18 tame giraffe which came in to the town for water. Like so many other expatriates living in the drier areas of Africa he also kept couple of cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*) cubs as pets. In 1934 he had an extended leave of four months. The Sudan Government Quarterly List for 1 January 1935 has Veterinary Inspector Captain R S Audas, M.C. M.R.C.V.S, Nile 3rd Class listed as



Figure 9: "Trematon", 18 Cardigan Road, Bridlington (behind tree), the home of Robert Audas in 1927 (image courtesy of Google Earth)

<sup>8</sup>The horse breeding scheme continued in a modified form for many years. When the Author of this paper lived in Nyala in 1972 the unit had a stallion imported from Kenya. This animal was reputed as *shadid* (strong but in this context dangerous) and unrideable: the Author put this myth to bed after a few outings with the horse who proved very tractable following appropriate measures to convince him who was in charge.

being in Darfur but due for retirement. Robert Starmer Audas aged 51 arrived in London on 22 July 1935 on board the SS Oxfordshire from Port Sudan with his profession listed as Retired from Sudan Government Service and going to c/o Holt & Co Kirkland House, Whitehall [33]<sup>9</sup>. (Figure10-12).

### 1936-1937

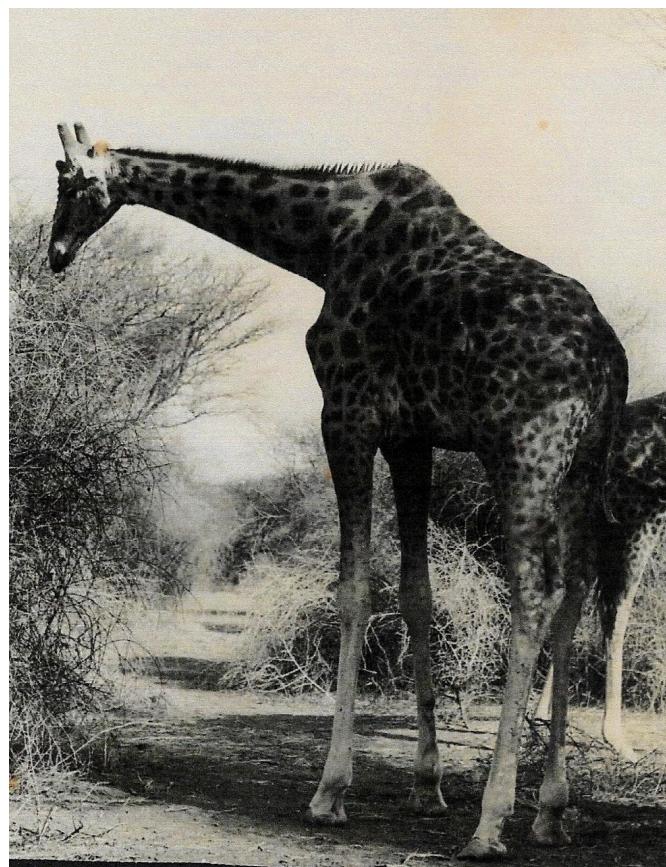
After his return from Sudan it is possible that Audas toured parts of Europe. On 9 March 1936, for example, he arrived in London from Gibraltar on board the SS Viceroy of India. He was aged 52,

retired, and going to 18 Cardigan Road, Bridlington [34]. The fact that he travelled 2nd Class makes it unlikely that it was an official trip. The call of Sudan was strong, however, whether he returned at the end of 1936, departing Liverpool on 4 December on board the SS Derbyshire of the Bibby Line. His home address was 18 Cardigan Lane, he was aged 52 and his occupation was Government Official [35]. Government Official he may have been but he spent almost all if not entirely all his time hunting in Darfur.

Some two months after his arrival in El Fasher Audas was joined by Mrs Vivien Henriques who had sailed from Birkenhead to Port

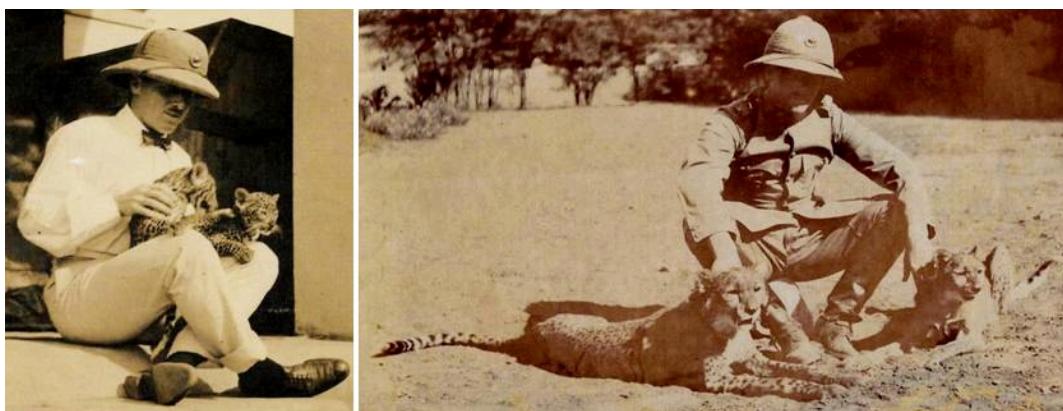


**Figure 10:** Extra-curricular activities enjoyed by Robert Starmer Audas in El Fasher: polo, hunting, formal receptions



**Figure 11:** Part of the herd of tame giraffe that came to El Fasher for water

<sup>9</sup>Holt and Company was an army agency, established by William Kirkland, agent to the First Regiment of Foot, in Bennett Street, St James's, London, in about 1809. Army agents kept regimental accounts, distributed pay and subsistence, dealt in supplies of clothing, claims for pensions and injury and provided a general banking business for soldiers and their families. The Company became part of the Royal Bank of Scotland in 1992.



**Figure 12:** Audas in rather formal attire with two cheetah cubs and after their growth

Sudan on board the SS Yuma of the Bibby Line on 5 February 1937 [36]. She then continued overland and by air to El Fasher. Robert Henriques arrived in El Fasher soon afterwards<sup>10</sup>. The apparent main objective of this reunion and the hunting *safari* that followed was for Audas to "shoot just one more lion" [37].

Audas had served in the Royal Artillery for several years in Sudan but he was a debutant in big game hunting. He remarks several times in his book that lion (*Panthera leo*) are "pure vermin" and during his six weeks sojourn in Darfur he shot, from hides, two as well as two leopard (*Panthera pardus*). During his time in Darfur, Henriques notes that "Game was profuse". He saw, for example, gazelle (Red-fronted gazelle *Gazella rufifrons*), tiang (Topi, *Damaliscus lunatus tiang*), hartebeest (Lelwel hartebeest, *Alcelaphus bucelaphus lelwel*), duiker (Grimm's duiker *Silicaprora grimmii*), roan antelope (*Hippotragus equinus*), water buck (Defassa waterbuck *Kobus defassa*), greater kudu (*Tragelaphus strepsiceros*) and buffalo (*Synacerus caffer*) in one morning near the Darfur-Central African Republic border<sup>11</sup>. Henriques really wanted to obtain trophy heads of various antelope species and especially of greater kudu but failed to do so.

Audas was no debutant and he was not interested – at least no longer interested – in trophy heads. By this time he was "rated the world's greatest authority on animals in the Sudan", was said "to possess the finest collection of head and trophies ever shot by one man" and had "shot 100 elephants, 51 lions and 27 leopards in addition to innumerable small bag" (Appendix C). According to Henriques [37] he was greeted with delight wherever they went on this last journey. He had recruited many of his former staff for the trip and lived in the style to which he was accustomed, sleeping in a large tent, his meals served by his former butler and drinking gin and whisky at sundown (Figure 13). It is not surprising that he was welcomed on this jaunt. During his service shooting elephants prevented them from destroying crops and provided meat, shooting lion and leopard prevented them from killing livestock. His vaccination campaigns and general veterinary duties prevented the deaths of thousands (possibly hundreds of thousands) of cattle. On this last trip Audas and Henriques did further service to the locals by providing employment to locals and injecting cash into the local economy. They also reduced

the depredations of predatory carnivores by killing 14 lions and 19 leopards. Audas shot two leopards and three lions - bringing his total for this latter species to 63 - in one night. He abhorred the use of poison but shot from a hide in a tree situated over a pool of water where the animals came to drink and did not risk stalking and killing in the open.

After a short period of six weeks or so in the bush of Darfur, Audas, accompanied by Vivien Henriques (her husband had already left by air), arrived in London from Port Sudan on 21 May 1937 aboard the SS Derbyshire of the Bibby Line. He was aged 53, travelled First Class, worked for the Sudan Government and gave his forwarding address as c/o Holt & Co, Kirkland House, Whitehall, London. Mrs Henriques was 29 years old and was going to Windsor Hill Farm, Bibury in Gloucestershire [41].

## Later life

### 1939-1951

After completing his service in Sudan, Audas lived with his sister Dorothy at 18 Cardigan Road, Bridlington. He continued his association with the Henriques family, however, and on 29 September 1939 – just after World War II had started and when a kind of census (known as the 1939 Register) was undertaken - he was a visitor at the Henriques home at Mill Farm, Winston, Northleach in Gloucestershire. The household comprised Robert Q E Henriques, a Regular Army Officer, his wife Vivien, two children, a French Governess and three other live-in servants as well as Audas who was aged 55 and a Captain retired from the RAVC [42]. He had been removed from the Reserve of Officers earlier in the year as he had reached the age limit for the liability to recall [43]:

#### REGULAR ARMY RESERVE OF OFFICERS.

The under-mentioned having attained the age limit of liability to recall cease to belong to the Res. of Off: —

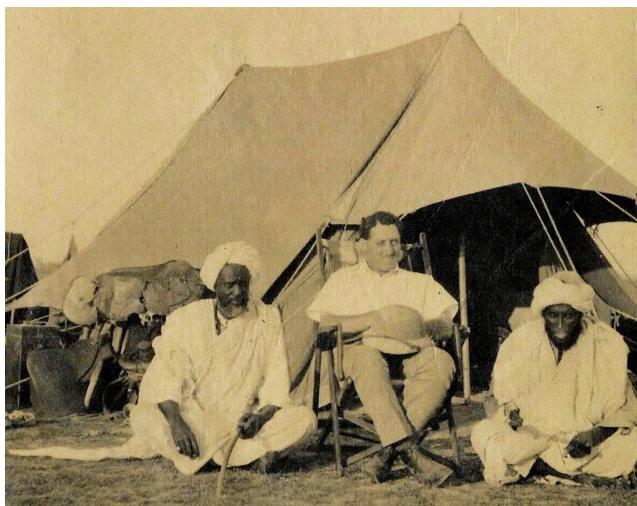
#### GENERAL LIST.

#### ROYAL ARMY VETERINARY CORPS.

Capt. R. S. Audas, M.C. 23rd Jan. 1939

<sup>10</sup>Robert David Quixano Henriques was of Sephardic Jewish (Portuguese) extraction. He joined the Royal Artillery in 1926 and served in Egypt and Sudan but had to retire in 1933 following a riding accident. He became a successful writer of novels and biographies and was friendly with several of the better-known authors of the 1930s and 1940s. Like Audas he was fixated on Darfur. His book, "Death by Moonlight", is an account of this hunting trip which had been planned at the Henriques' house in Gloucestershire during October 1936. Henriques was keen to shoot lion and leopard as well as several species of large rare antelopes but in the event he was totally outclassed by Audas, whose name is never mentioned in the book where he is referred to, "thinly disguised", as Wimpole. Henriques was recalled to the colours in 1939 and was later Brigade Major with the Royal Artillery 61st Division. Mrs Henriques, an avid sportswoman herself, rode regularly with the local fox-hunting pack for many years after her return to England and was a Local Ambulance Driver during the 1939-1945 War.

<sup>11</sup>During the religious uprising of the 1880s and 1890s, the men of Darfur had flocked to Khartoum to join the Mahdi and "wild animals [took] possession of the empty plains" [38] Another independent observation confirms that in the 1930s southern Darfur was "teeming with game" [39]. In the period 1947-1951 the large carnivores were still relatively common: 76 lion, 20 leopard, 688 hyaena and 656 jackals and foxes were legally shot or poisoned by the Veterinary Department in this period [40]. That is all gone: during 1972-1977 when the Author worked in Southern and Western Darfur virtually no large carnivores nor large ungulates still survived.



**Figure 13:** Audas at ease in camp with two of his servants

In October 1946 Audas took exception to what he called the "ruthless destruction of Africa's big game" and penned a fulminating memo which he probably thought to publish but which never was (Appendix D). This destruction was being carried out - or was going to be carried out - in an attempt to eradicate the tsetse fly. Some five years later, in 1951, he wrote a synthesis of eight trips through Northern Darfur and Northern Kordofan over a 24-year period. His conclusion was that the large herds of Scimitar-horned Oryx and Addax (*Addax nasomaculatus*) had been considerably reduced. By 1937 their numbers were dangerously low due in the main to increased numbers of firearms acquired by nomads following World War I and the trade in their dried meat (*sharmoot*) and hides which were used to make ropes and grain bags. He was more positive about Barbary sheep (Aoudad, *Ammotragus lervia*) which received some protection through the cooperation of the Governor, Charles Dupuis, the tribal chiefs and the appointment of a well-known hunter and his son as wardens [44]. These two documents seem somewhat at odds with his own personal history and could be part of the well known syndrome of poachers becoming gamekeepers.

#### 1950-1966

Audas never married. When asked about this he said he felt it would not have been fair for a wife to have had to put up with army life abroad. He and his sister Dorothy (whose older farming husband had died in and who had taken on the job of Audas' "housekeeper" and helpmeet) moved from their previous house at 18 Cardigan Road



**Figure 14:** Audas at the bungalow at 11 Forty Foot, Bridlington with visiting Sudanese officials

to a bungalow at 11 Fortyfoot, Bridlington about 1950. His family recall much of his hunting trophy collection kept in the garage and being brought out and cleaned annually. He also had a quantity of African hardwood which he carved into tea spoons (often given away to visitors) and letter racks. He also had a local joiners turn some into a blanket chest. On at least one occasion he was delighted to receive visitors from Sudan at this home (Figure 14) and continued to receive Christmas cards from the Sudanese Government for very many years.

It was at this time also that his health began to decline and he became a semi-invalid. On 17 March 1950 he wrote his Last Will and Testament in which he left his Bridlington Estate to Dorothy Holtby, who was also appointed as executrix. His eyesight also degenerated and he was nearly blind for the last two years of his life. Dorothy later persuaded him to give a brief account of his life in Sudan, which she wrote down longhand, only seven weeks before his death (Appendix E). Robert Starmer Audas died aged 81 on 5 January 1966 [44]. He was buried three days later in the graveyard of St Andrew's church, Boynton, about three miles west of Hull (Figure 15)<sup>12</sup>. Sister Dorothy mixed some of Audas' collection of pebbles from Jebel Marra in the soil that covered him: she later donated some pebbles to the Durham Archives [45]. Probate of his personal estate valued at £27 329 was granted to Dorothy Holtby, widow, of 11 Fortyfoot, Bridlington, on 9 March 1966 [46].

An obituary written by a former colleague - the one with whom the first ascent of Jebel Marra was made - provides a deeper insight of Audas than could be gathered from the official documents cited in this paper (Appendix F) [47]. We learn, for example that he was known by his middle name of Starmer. That he was a "character"



**Figure 15:** Gravestone of Robert Starmer Audas in the churchyard of St Andrew's Church, Boynton and broader view showing headstone of his sister Dorothy Starmer Holtby and the churchyard in general

<sup>12</sup>Dorothy Holtby, of Parklands Hall, Middleton on the Wolds, North Humberside, aged 97, died on 14 January 1986 of broncho-pneumonia and heart disease and was interred next to her brother three days later on 17 January 1986.

probably has come through already, that he went looking for trouble in tribal disturbances – he could not have been awarded five Clasps to his Khedive's Medal by being opportunely in the place where the disturbances took place - is also evident from the official sources. That he was a blunt Yorkshireman will come as no surprise to those of us who also hail from that County. He was clearly no respecter of persons – he probably went looking for fools so that he would not suffer them gladly - and this may have been partly the reason that he was never promoted above Captain although it is probable that he made it clear he did not want promotion. A more aesthetic side comes through in the obituary in the reference to his artistic capabilities. That he loved the Sudan and its people is clear and that he was instrumental in its economic progress through his veterinary field work should not be forgotten and is an important facet of his legacy.

## Acknowledgements

Simon Robinson, a great great nephew of Captain Audas, was of great help in preparation of this manuscript, supplying information, photographs and family anecdotes. I cannot adequately express my thanks for his willing assistance in the construction of this paper. Clare Boulton (RCVSKnowledge), Carolyn Kokta and Natalie Meredith (Arab Horse Society), Rhianna Watson (Search Room Assistant at Durham's Sudan Archive) and Janet Bielby (East Yorkshire Family History Society) provided information and resources for incorporation in the text. Figure 15 is courtesy of Janet Bielby.

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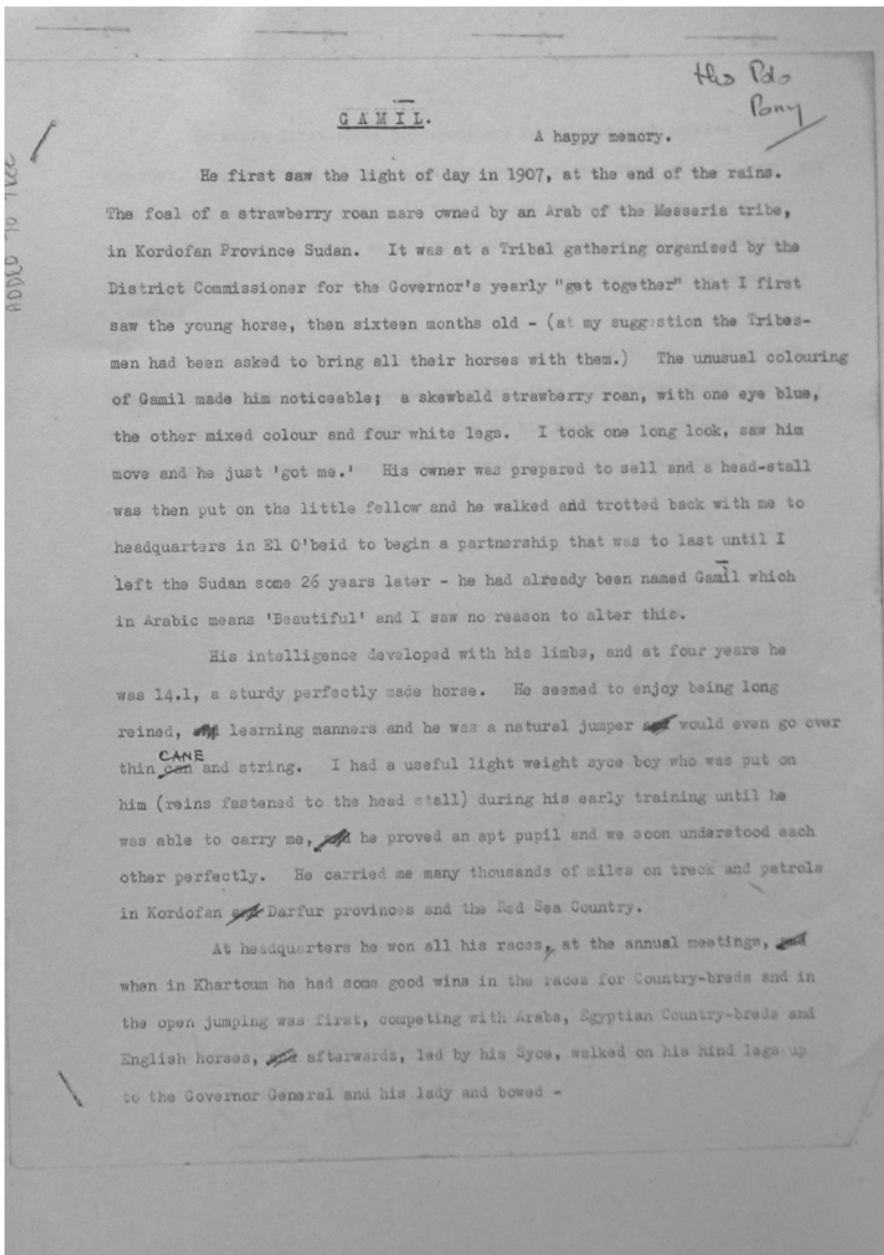
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## Appendix A

### A happy memory

The typescript reproduced here was made available to me by Audas' great nephew, Simon Robinson, from his family archives

The document is also available as: SAD.455/2/6-8 [n.d.] "Gamil", by Audas. An account of his horse for 26 years. (ts). Durham: Durham University Library, Archives and Special Collections: Sudan Archive, n.d.; typescript.



2

He was a first class polo-pony and we enjoyed many chukkas together, over a period of some eighteen years, he was never sick or lame, ~~and~~ when I considered he had been a faithful friend and servant long enough he was sent to the Nyala Stud, as he had already been responsible for several good foals. He was never shod, ~~and~~ had four perfect hooves and retained his stamina and condition.

I arranged with a reliable friend (an officer in the Western Arab Corps) to see that he had a humane departure from this world, on the day I had to leave the Sudan Government. One of his hooves is on my desk as I write, and if an epitaph was needed it would be "He was a gentleman."

R.S.A.

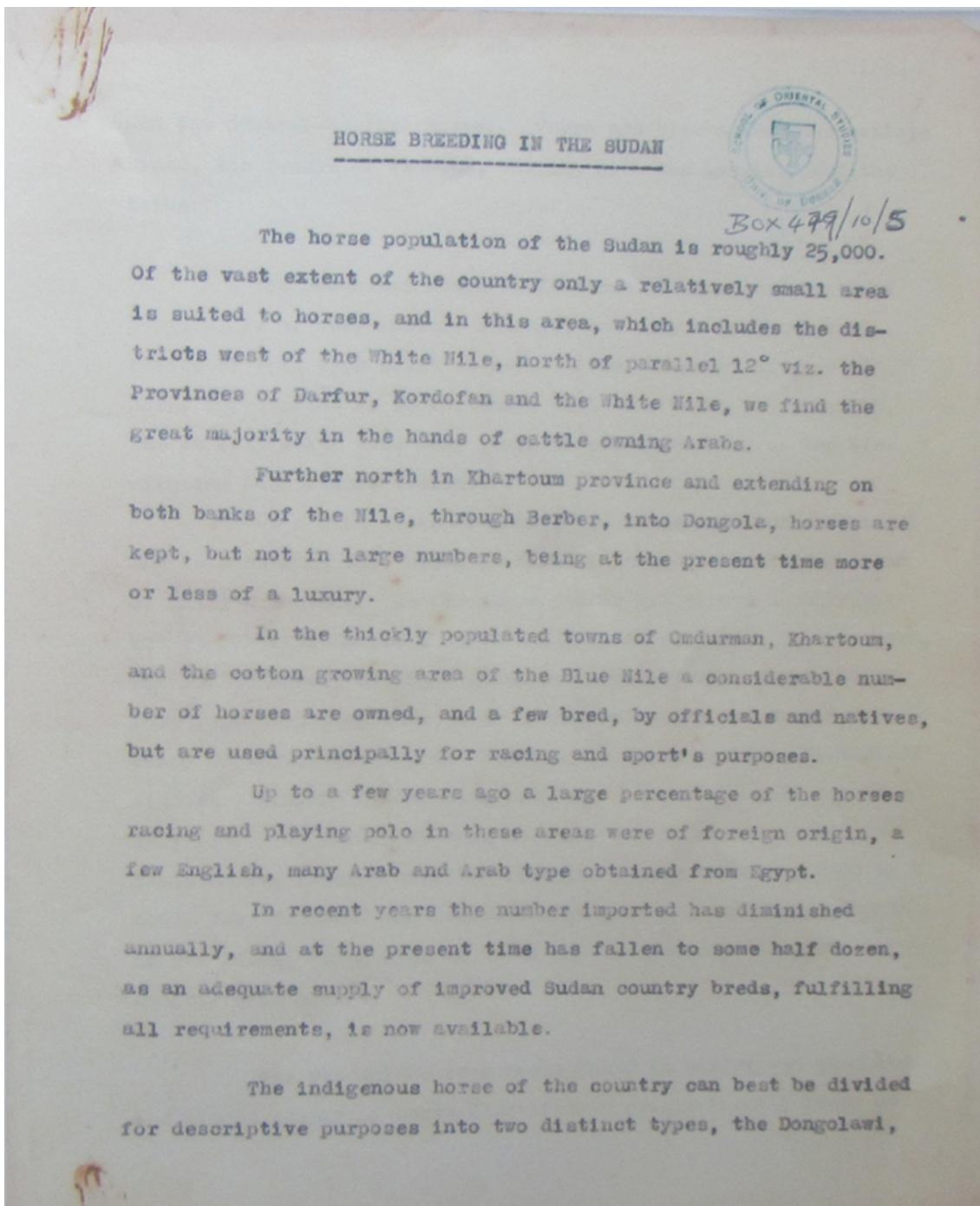
Showed you accept this, just my mistake  
R.S.A. please

## Appendix B

### Horse Breeding in Sudan

The two documents reproduced here underline the interest in horses exhibited by Audas. He spent a lot of time and energy on establishing and promoting the breeding schemes, especially in Nyala, from 1925 onwards.

The typescript document is also available as: SAD.479/10/5-12 [post 1925] "Horse breeding in the Sudan", by Audas (ts). Durham: Durham University Library, Archives and Special Collections: Sudan Archive, n.d.; typescript. The published article was obtained via the good offices of The Arab Horse Society and is reproduced here with permission.



-2-

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and the Central-Western Horse. There are also a few intermediate types, the result of crosses, varying with the locality and the tribe.



The Dongolawi found in Khartoum province and North of Dongola, is of very ancient lineage, and only a few pure bred horses of this type exist to-day. From the point of view of horse improvement it is fortunate that this breed is dying out, but it will still take many years to eliminate many of the displeasing heritable traits.

As a rule he is "mukhamas" (a blaze and four stockings) and is chestnut, bay, brown or black in colour, never grey, roan or party coloured. He possesses one or two points usually considered objectionable, a Roman nose, small pig eyes, a heavy neck, pronounced crest, straight shoulders and posterns, high withers, fore legs close together, toes turned out and a consequent tendency to speedy-cutting and brushing. He is shallow, flat-sided with very sloping quarters, a pronounced croup and tail set on very low. He stands as much as 15.2, and is essentially a fantasia horse, popular with the riverine people in former days as a mount for "dilukas" and ceremonial gatherings, for which purpose he was ideal, being high in front and low behind, with an extravagantly high action.

The Central-Western Horse found in Darfur and Kordofan and almost surely of North-West African origin locally known as

-3-

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"Furawi" or "Kordofani" may be of any colour, but bay is pre-dominant, chestnut, grey, brown, roan and party coloured horses being next commonest in that order. The further West, the more varied becomes the colours, skewbalds, piebalds, occasional white and wall-eyed ponies being not infrequently found.

A characteristic "Furawi" is square, sturdy and small, usually not exceeding 14 hands, lacking in quality, straight shoulders and a short thick neck.

Considering the hardships to which most of them are subjected and the privations they are often forced to endure from foal-hood, many being ridden as yearlings and later even as two-year olds, in hunting elephant and giraffe, these ponies possess wonderful stamina and are remarkably sound and free from bone disease.

The intermediate types are the result of crossing of the two before-mentioned breeds, and in some cases the introduction in the past of foreign blood, Egyptian, Barb, and Arab.

In the early days of the occupation of the Sudan, most officials were mounted on horses obtained from Egypt, the late Sultan of Darfur possessed many such horses, but again type has varied considerably with environment as, for instance, the horses owned by the Nomads of the Northern desert, which are a type on their own, with more quality, better necks, larger eyes, and grey their favourite colour. Up to 1914, many of the Messeria ponies (Kordofan) showed distinct traces of Arab blood, the result of

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horses captured from Hick's Pashas' Army in 1882.

The foregoing roughly explains the conditions and describes the material with which the Government had to work. Since 1910 a few keen officials have attempted to do something in their own districts, but the results, as were to be expected, were negligible, and their disappearance coincided with the departure of the official concerned. Since the same year and up to 1925 the Veterinary Department have had standing at various places odd imported stallions, Arabs, Egyptians and one thoroughbred, the latter presented by the late Lord Kitchener. This horse was responsible for many foals, but owing to inadequate supervision in the outlying districts, little care was taken in the selection of mares, and many of his foals that did not succumb to neglect and disease were lost sight of.

In Khartoum, where conditions were more favourable, many of the best S.C.B. winners were the progeny of this sire.

At this time many native owners of good mares treated Government interference with a certain amount of suspicion and were not always willing to bring them up for service, probably for the following reasons. Firstly, being under the impression that the Government would lay some claim to the foal, in spite of assurances to the contrary, secondly, being afraid of losing favour with a native owner of a stallion who would thereby lose his fee, and thirdly, the "evil eye" and the idea that the progeny of imported horses would be more likely to succumb to disease, (Horse sickness).

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It should be mentioned that castration of horses is not practised by the native. He is generally a happy-go-lucky - "Allah Kareim" sort of fellow, and often fails to give his animals sufficient supervision, the result being that a good deal of promiscuous mating takes place.

In March 1910 the first horse gathering in the Sudan was held at Abu Zabad, Kordofan province where the Messeria tribe turned out some 2,000 horses.

This show became an annual event. Since 1918, a year after the taking over of Darfur, seven or eight shows have been held annually at places convenient for the horse owning tribes of Kordofan and Darfur. Some 18,000 horses attend these gatherings. A northern Show is also held at Shendi, the headquarters of the Sudan cavalry. It is at these shows where every horse, mare and foal in the tribes is filed past and inspected, that opportunity occurs of comparing results from year to year, and for the purchasing of remounts for the Army, Police and Civil requirements.

These annual events are eagerly looked forward to as a festive reunion by the tribes concerned, where all sorts of questions are discussed, purchase money for horses bought by the Government paid out, awards presented and advice, explanations and instructions on stock improvement given in a congenial atmosphere.

Experience has proved that the best district for horse production under entirely natural conditions is South Central Darfur and it is here that the Government has concentrated most of its stallions. To show good results foals must be produced in large numbers. Wastage is considerable and under normal con-



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ditions only about 40% would reach maturity (as apart from disease and injuries, lions and hyaenas take their toll) and of these many would not be up to standard.

The Arab owner is only just beginning to realize that the dam plays at least a 50% part in the production of the foal, and that good horses cannot be produced from neglected, starved, mis-shapen mares.

In 1925 a definite breeding scheme was inaugurated on sound lines in Kordofan and Darfur. A Stud book was started, and the best mares of each tribe were selected, registered and tattooed, and the owners were instructed to mate them with Government or approved tribal stallions.

Sufficient stallion power was provided, each sire was given a letter of the alphabet and the resulting foals, after being inspected and checked, were tattooed in the upper gum with the letter denoting their sire.

Mares and foals thus branded were held tax free. Thanks to the keen interest shown by all concerned, both officials and natives, much success has attended these efforts, most obstacles have been overcome, three seasons of drought and grain shortage have been weathered, and during the past few years increasingly large numbers of Stud bred horses have been produced. The stage has now been reached when many native mares are three quarter Arab, and great care has been exercised in the mating of these.

The object of the scheme was to produce not a racing machine but a utility horse of improved type, to supply officers and officials with sports horses, the Army and Police with remounts,

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the native with a higher class horse and eventually to supply a local breed to do away with the necessity of importing horses from abroad, which aim has now been successfully achieved.

Experience has shown that the pure desert Arab is the sire most capable of correcting conformation and improving native stock. In spite of the fact that several good friends, interested in horse improvement, have from time to time presented good Arab horses, considerable difficulties were encountered in obtaining the requisite number of right types from Egypt, time and money were often short, and it was a question of being content with sound good looking Arab type stallions of doubtful breeding, but results have shown that from these horses, the progeny, although in most cases better than the pure native, was disappointing.

It is interesting to state that some of these stallions although with wonderful racing records, and classified in the Egyptian calendar as first class Arabs, have proved themselves to belong to the above category.

On the other hand, the horses, whose history is definitely beyond doubt, have in all cases, no matter what type of mare, never failed to reproduce distinctive characteristics and stamp their offspring.

During the last few years, the Government has purchased from time to time an odd thoroughbred, to which number three horses have been added, the generous gifts of the late Lord Woolavington, Lord Astor and Jack Gibson, Esq.

The thoroughbred, when mated with the right type of

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native mare does produce a horse with shape, size and racing capabilities, but with nondescript, especially those possessing Dongolawi blood, he is not capable of correcting conformation or endowing his offspring with his particular characteristics as is the case with the Arab.

A foal by a thoroughbred cannot be successfully reared under normal native conditions as he must live a pampered existence where special care and a liberal diet are forthcoming.

He is a luxury horse, and can therefore only be produced by owners with knowledge and ample means, and as far as the native is concerned their chief incentive is the chance of winning money on the race course, and the glory of ownership.

Providing a few high class Arab stallions are introduced from time to time, there is every reason to suppose that the Sudan will be in a position, not only to supply all local requirements, but probably to export horses comparing favourably with many of North Africa and the Middle East.



March, 1936

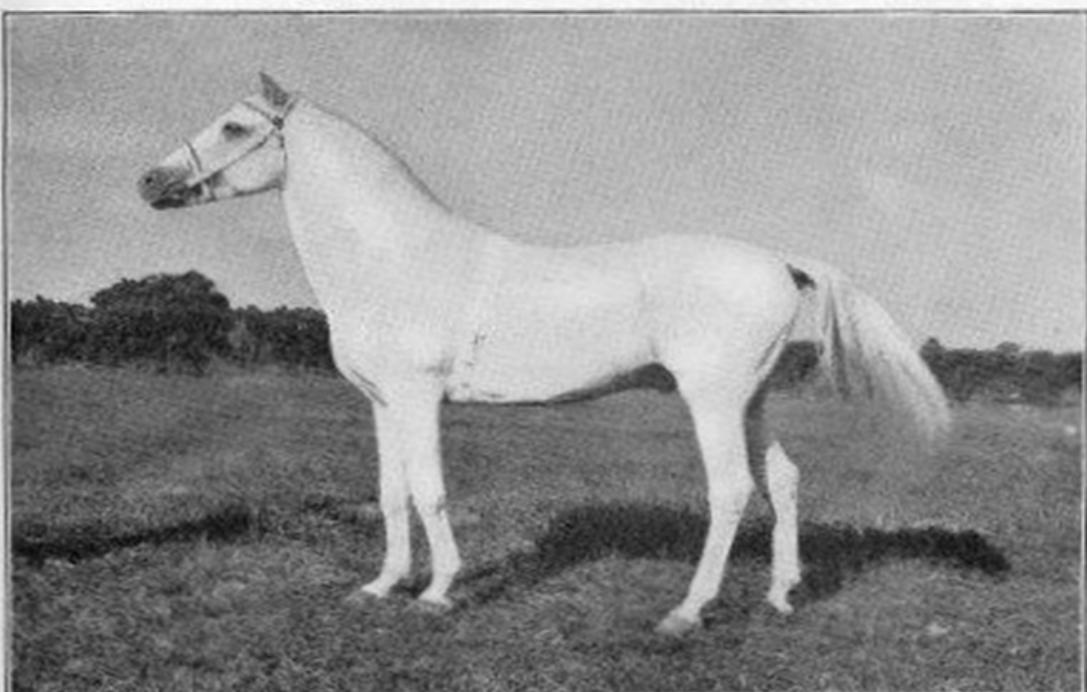
THE ARAB HORSE

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## Horse Improvement in the Sudan

By Mr. C. G. DUPUIS, C.B.E., *late Governor of Darfur* and CAPT. R. S. AUDAS, M.C.

THE horse population of the Sudan is very roughly 25,000. Of the vast extent of the country only a relatively small area is suited to horses, and in this area, which includes the districts West of the White Nile. North of parallel 11°—viz., the Provinces of Darfur, Kordofan and the White Nile—we find the great majority in the hands of semi-nomadic cattle-owning Arabs. Further North, in Khartoum Province and extending on both banks of the Nile through Berber into Dongola, horses are kept, but not in large numbers, being at the present time more or less of a luxury. In the towns of Omdurman and Khartoum, and in the thickly-populated cotton-growing area of the Blue Nile, a considerable number of horses are owned, and a few bred, both by British and natives, but are used principally for racing and sporting purposes.



MELEK Arabian Stallion. Presented to H.E. The Governor-General of the Sudan by H.M. the King of the Hejaz in 1919.

Up to a few years ago, a large percentage of the horses racing and playing polo in these areas were of foreign origin—a few English, but the majority Arabs or of Arab type obtained from Egypt.

The indigenous horse of the Sudan may be divided for descriptive purposes into two distinct types, the Dongolawi, or Northern Sudan horse, and the Central-Western horse. There are also, naturally, a few intermediate types.

The "Dongolawi," found in Khartoum Province, and Northwards on the Nile, is of very ancient lineage and only a few pure-bred horses of this type exist to-day. As a rule, he is Mukhammas (a blaze and four stockings) and is chestnut, bay, brown, or black in colour, but never grey, roan, or parti-coloured. He possesses many points usually considered objectionable—a Roman nose, small pig eyes, a heavy neck, pronounced crest, straight shoulders and pasterns, high withers, forelegs close together, toes turned out, and a consequent

tendency to speedy-cutting and brushing. He is shallow and flat-sided, with very sloping quarters, a pronounced croup, a tail set on very low. He stands as high as 15.2, and is essentially a "fantasia" horse, popular with the riverain people in former days as a mount for "Dilukas" (dancing parties), and ceremonial gatherings, for which purposes he was ideal, being high in front and low behind with an extravagantly high action.

The Central-Western horse, found in Darfur, Kordofan and the White Nile Provinces, and almost certainly of North-west African origin, is locally known as "Furawi" or "Kordofani." He may be of any colour, but bay is predominant, chestnut, grey, brown, roan, and parti-coloured horses being commonest in that order. The further West, the more varied become the colours, skewbalds, piebalds and occasionally white and wall-eyed ponies being not infrequent in Western Darfur.

A characteristic "Furawi" is square, sturdy, and small, usually not exceeding 14 hands. He is lacking in quality, with straight shoulders and a short thick neck. But the breed possesses wonderful stamina, and, considering the hardships and privations to which they are often subjected in foalhood—for many are ridden as yearlings, and two-year-olds are used even for elephant, and giraffe-hunting—they are remarkably sound and free from bone diseases.



CRITERION Arab Stallion. Presented to Sudan Government.

The intermediate types are the results of crossing of the "Dongolawi" and "Furawi" breeds, modified in some cases by the introduction in the past of Egyptian, Barb, or Arab blood by European officials or others. It is noteworthy for instance that the Arab characteristics which up to 1914 were noticeable in many ponies owned by the Messeria tribe of Kordofan, were credibly attributed by their owners to the influence of Arab horses captured from Hicks Pasha's ill-fated army in 1883.

Such was the material on which any attempt at horse-improvement in the Sudan had to be based. The Arab horse-owner moreover was generally a happy-go-lucky sort of fellow, who left the care of his animals very much to Allah, and since castration was not practised, it may be imagined that a good deal of promiscuous mating took place. Even the better-type native owners of good mares were apt, in the early days, to regard Government interference with a certain amount of suspicion and were often reluctant to bring them up for service; firstly from a vague uneasiness lest, in spite of assurances to the contrary, Government could lay some sort of claim to the foal; secondly from fear of the "evil eye"; and thirdly from the not ill-founded notion that the progeny of imported horses might be more liable to succumb to disease, especially to horse-sickness.

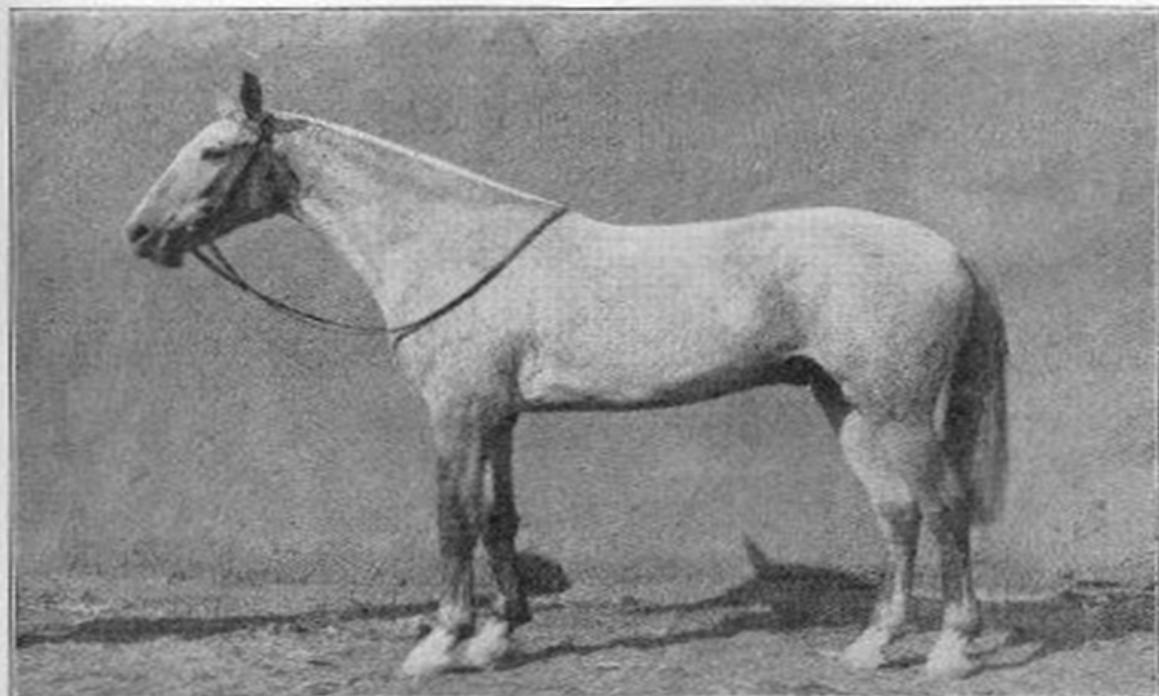
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Early efforts at improvement were spasmodic. Even since the reconquest of the Sudan in 1898-1899 there have been keen officials who attempted to do something in their own districts: but the results, as was to be expected, were negligible, and their disappearance coincided with the departure of the individual concerned. Since 1910 the Sudan Veterinary Department have had standing a few imported stallions, notably one thoroughbred, the gift of the late Lord Kitchener, but it was not till 1925 that a definite breeding scheme was started in Kordofan and Darfur (occupied in 1916) with the object of producing, not a few racing machines, but an improved local breed capable of supplying the requirements of British and native officers and officials for racing and polo, the Army and Police with remounts, and the native with improved riding animals, and of eventually doing away altogether with the necessity for importing any horses from abroad.

It was obvious that, to show good results under native conditions such as have been sketched above, foals must be produced in large numbers, and it was recognised that, after disease and injuries, lions and hyenas had taken their toll, only about 40 per cent. would reach maturity and of these many would be below standard. Accordingly not only were a number of imported stallions provided at suitable centres, but they were reinforced by the selection and registration of a few of the best country-bred stallions in each tribe. The best



Gray Gelding 15½ hands, half Arab, quarter Part-Bred Arab, quarter Native breed.

of the mares were selected and marked, and the co-operation of the tribal chiefs was enlisted to encourage their owners to mate them with Government or approved tribal stallions. An attempt to keep a stud-book proved impracticable, but a careful record was kept of all services, and the resulting foals, after being selected and checked, were tattooed in the upper gum with a letter of the alphabet denoting their sire. As an additional inducement, selected mares and their tattooed foals were exempted from payment of animal tax.

The area to be covered was about the size of France, and the number of available British administrative and Veterinary officials could be counted almost on the fingers of one hand. The scheme would hardly have been workable, but for the system of annual tribal horse-shows or fairs, which is a feature of tribal administration in the Western Sudan. The first of these was held in 1910 at Abu Zabad by the Messeria tribe of Kordofan, and was quickly imitated by other tribes. Since 1918, (two years after the occupation of Darfur) seven or eight such shows have been held annually for the horse-owning tribes of Kordofan and Darfur, and a Northern show is held at Shendi on the Nile, the Headquarters of the mounted troops of the

Sudan Defence Force. Some 18,000 horses and mares attend these gatherings annually. They are eagerly looked forward to by chiefs and tribesmen as festival re-unions, and the administrative authorities find them intensely valuable for the conduct of tribal business, the ventilation of grievances, and the discussion of current problems in a congenial atmosphere. At these shows every horse, mare and foal in the tribes is filed past for inspection by the British Veterinary Inspector, mares are selected, foals marked, explanations and instructions broadcasted, and advice given. At the same time remounts are purchased and paid for.

Experience has proved that the best district for horse-production under entirely natural conditions is South-Central Darfur, where grazing and watering conditions are particularly favourable and it is here that Government has now concentrated most of its stallions.



Half-Bred Arab Mare with foal by Arab Stallion.

This is no place for a history of the Scheme and its vicissitudes, nor for a catalogue of its administrative assets. Suffice it to say that, thanks to the keen and unflagging interest shown by all concerned, both British and Native (and the tribal chiefs not least) many of the difficulties have been overcome and the Scheme is now achieving a large measure of success. Three seasons of drought and grain-shortage have been weathered, and an increasingly large number of stud-bred horses is produced every year—and produced very cheaply. The annual import of horses from Egypt for racing and polo has shrunk to a mere half-dozen, and in short, the objects of the Scheme are in a fair way to being realised.

Moreover the Arab owner is learning that the dam plays at least a 50% part in the production of the foal, and that good horses cannot be produced from neglected, starved, miss-shaped mares. The stage has now been reached when many natives are the proud owners of three-quarter-Arab mares, and great care is exercised in their mating.

The pure desert Arab has proved himself beyond all doubt to be the sire most capable of correcting faults in conformation and improving native stock. Unfortunately, though several good friends have from time to time presented good Arab horses, the purchase from Egypt of the right type in sufficient numbers has been a matter of some difficulty. Time and money are often short, and the Veterinary Department has sometimes had to be content

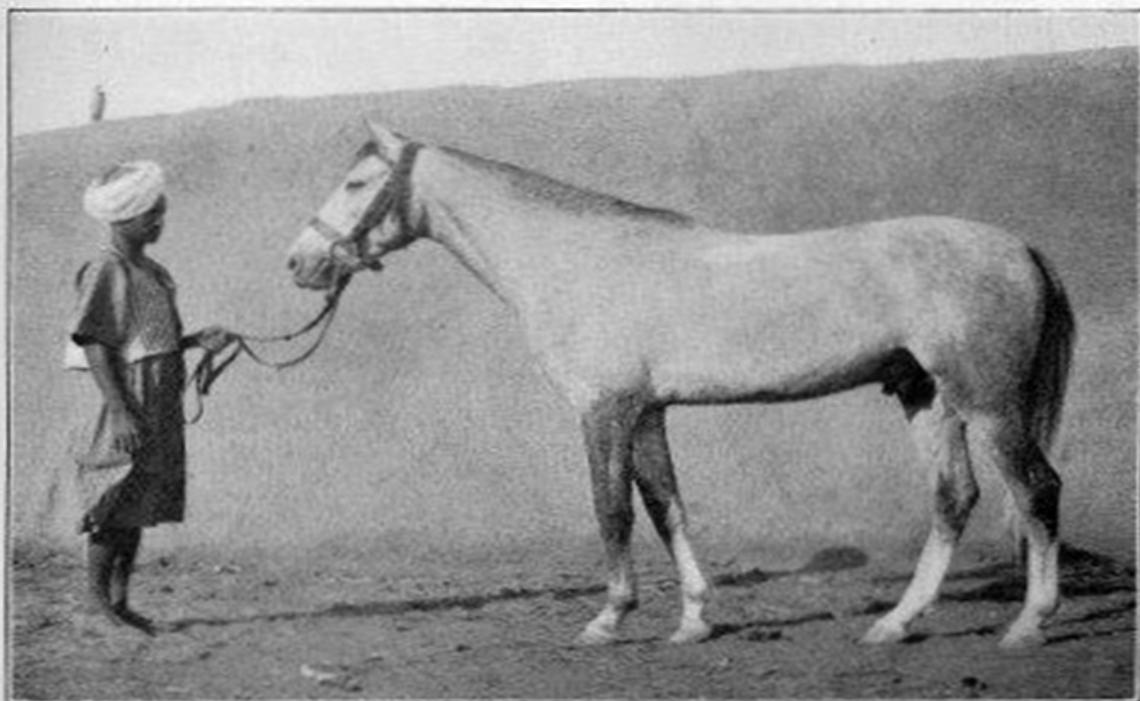
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with sound good-looking stallions of *Arab type* but of *doubtful breeding*. The progeny of these sires, though in most cases an improvement on the native pony, is distinctly disappointing, and it is interesting to note how stallions with wonderful racing records, and classified in the Egyptian Calendar as "first-class Arabs," have proved themselves to belong to this doubtful category. On the other hand those horses, whose history as pure Arabs is beyond doubt, have in all cases and from no matter what type of mare consistently reproduced their distinctive Arab characteristics and stamped their offspring.

From time to time an odd thoroughbred stallion has been purchased, and three have been generously presented by the late Lord Woolavington, Lord Astor, and Mr. Jack Gibson.



Grey Gelding 14.2½ hands. Three-quarter Arab, quarter Native breed.

As was proved by the late Lord Kitchener's horse, the thoroughbred, when mated with the right type of native mare, does produce a foal with shape, size, and racing capabilities; but with nondescript mares, especially of the "Dongolawi" breed, he is not capable of correcting conformation or endowing his offspring with his peculiar characteristics, as is the Arab. Moreover, a foal by a thoroughbred, which needs special care and a very liberal diet, cannot in practise be successfully reared under normal semi-nomadic native conditions. He is, therefore, a luxury horse and can only be produced by a small class of native owners with special knowledge and ample means, whose incentive may be the glory of ownership, but is more often the hope of winning money on the racecourse.

For our all-purposes sire we must rely on the Arab, and provided a few really high-class Arab stallions are introduced from time to time, there is every reason to hope that the Sudan will before long be in a position, not only to supply all local requirements, but even to export at very moderate cost horses which compare favourably with many of North Africa and the Middle East.

R. S. A.  
C. G. D.

## Appendix C

### An Adventurous Life

This article presenting the life of Audas in a rather picturesque manner appeared in a Bridlington newspaper about the time of his retirement from Sudan in 1935 and before the hunting trip to Darfur in 1937.

I am indebted to Simon Robinson for providing this cutting.

"I shall be pleased to hear other readers' opinions."

We will all be pleased to hear what the L.N.E.R. officials think about it.

**Bridlington Man's Adventurous Life**

**A**N East Riding man who has distinguished himself in army life, shot 100 elephants and 51 lions, and become the greatest authority in the world on animals in the Sudan, is just about to retire.

He is Major R. Starmer Audas (late of the Egyptian Army), who is just finishing 28 years' service in Africa.

Major Audas is the son of the late Mr Thomas Audas, L.D.S., of Trematon House, Bridlington, and was educated in London. After obtaining his commission he was attached to the 3rd King's Own Hussars in South Africa. At once the Major began to show his interest in sport, winning the army officers' heavy and middle-weight boxing championships, and going on to captain the regimental team.

He was then transferred to the Egyptian Army, and served in the Sudan. It was here that he began to make his mark as a big game hunter. Details of his exploits make amazing reading.

**A Recognised Authority**

**W**HILE in the Sudan he shot 100 elephants, 51 lions, and 27 leopards. This was in addition to innumerable small bag. Major Audas is now rated the world's greatest authority on animals in the Sudan, and has published several works on the subject.

That is not all, for he is said to possess the finest collection of heads and trophies ever shot by one man. In Khartoum he was a popular figure, and he is still remembered by officers stationed in Egypt.

Shooting animals was not the extent of his activities. He was fond of polo. A keen racing owner, he was the donor of the Sudan trophy, the Audas Cup.

Major Audas was honoured by H.M. the Khedir of Egypt, from whose hands he received the title of Bey, and the

night.—"The

Order of the Nile. After his retirement from the army he held several important positions with the Sudan Government.

This soldier-sportsman has never forgotten his home county, and when on leave has often hunted with the Middleton East Hounds. In addition he has judged hounds at local shows.

**The Mosquito Plague**

**A**LTHOUGH the recent heavy rains and cold snap have just about killed off the mosquitoes which have been plaguing the people of Beverley High road, I feel justified in giving publicity to a note I have received from Bruges on the matter.

My correspondent is a resident of Cottingham-road, and writes that since arriving in Belgium he has come across an excellent plan for peaceful nights. The order of procedure when retiring is this:—

1. Shut the windows and turn on the light.
2. Spray any insect-killer liberally, killing all the insects in sight.
3. After preparing for bed turn out the light, then open the windows.

It is surprisingly effective.

Perhaps those affected will remember the hint in case of a similar raid next summer.

**Meat, Halfpenny a Pound**

**I**WONDER if there will be cheaper Sunday joints for the housewives who need them this week-end? I am prompted to make this query after perusing a report by our representative at the Hull Cattle Market this week. He states that cows were sold for as low as 30s and £2 a piece, which, he says, works out at about a halfpenny per pound.

This may not be classed as prime beef, as the animals in this particular instance are those which have had their day for milk purposes and have been turned out by the dairy farmers.

\* \* \*

**U**NDER normal circumstances, they should have realised more than they did, but at the moment stock-breeders are full of apprehension at the

## Appendix D

## The War on Africa's Game

This manuscript in Audas' own handwriting is interesting in the pro-wildlife feelings it expresses. Some six years later he wrote a paper in Sudan Wildlife and Sport on game in northern Darfur which also shows concern for the future of several iconic desert ungulate species. In neither paper is there any indication of his own part in the past in contributing to the demise of Africa's wildlife.

The document is also available as: SAD.479/10/1-4 1946 Oct 10 "The war on Africa's game", by Audas (ms).

Durham: Durham University Library, Archives and Special Collections: Sudan Archive.

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10<sup>th</sup> Oct 46

BOX 479/10/1



**The war on Africa's Game**

The ruthless destruction of Africa's Big Game at present being carried out with the object of eradicating the tsetse fly, appears to be based on the ideas expressed some fifty years ago by meat hunters, and a few men of scientific attainment, who stated their views without giving the matter serious thought or investigation. Their first reports blamed the large herds of Buffalo for the increased fly.

In 1896 Rinderpest swept through the country from the north, & it was after this that many areas which were infested were found to be free from fly. Reports were unreliable, chiefly from memory, yet it was a fact that in many areas south of the Zambezi tsetse had disappeared. The experts have not yet found any sound reason for this disappearance. To put it down to the fact that the death of all game cut off their food supply is absurd, can be ruled out by facts. We know that many areas were missed by the plague. That only the game with bare skin turned paid heavy toll. Buffalo & Kudu were reduced to a few individuals, eland, dinkie, bushbuck, warthog &c suffered severely, but even so, small numbers remained in the centre of fly areas, which areas have supplied food for the tsetse. The hartebeest, hildebeest, roan, zebra, impala &c, were practically uninfected. Cammels are not affected, yet all these & many others are every day diet for the fly.

Sir Alfred Sharp stated that in Nyasaland Rinderpest made no difference whatsoever to the status of the fly. In 1910 Sir Acting Governor General & British Nyasaland said in the Legislative Council, that ten years ago there was plenty of

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Game but no G. morsitans near ZOMBA, now conditions are reversed, game has been exterminated, but the fly has appeared and was increasing.

R.C.F. Maughan stated that G. morsitans does exist unsustained by the blood of the larger animals.

The Chief Government Entomologist of Southern Rhodesia states, that all scientific workers in Africa generally recognise that Game destruction is the cheapest, and so far the only possible method of eradicating the Tsetse in large areas of unpopulated country. — Many men with expert knowledge & experience, do not agree. — It says that bush clearing was more expensive than game extermination — also that the government are endeavouring to obtain the services of two trained entomologists to carry out experiments with D.D.T. — When he states that 6000 square miles has been cleared of fly, & another 4000 will shortly be cleared, does he infer that every form of mammalian food has been wiped out? — The greatest list of animals destroyed in 1945 shows only six hunting dogs and seventeen hyenas. The latter are known to harbour Trypanosomes.

We know that game soon disappears from settled areas, but its indiscriminate destruction by underpaid natives, outside the areas cannot be justified. It is absurd to think that the native employed to destroy game will be untrained. He will concentrate on the biggest & most profitable lump of meat, the most saleable hides, wildebeest & zebrae tails are he can get with the least expenditure of ammunition. He will not molest animals that do not bring him profit, & he certainly will not confine his activities to any refined areas, but

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3.

With us when the game is most plentiful.  
 Dr. Davey states that there is not the faintest possibility of the general extermination of game in Africa but it has increased in many native occupied regions. The opposite news are told by everyone with a knowledge of the facts. With the exception of a few small reserves, game ~~can be stated to~~ <sup>can be considered</sup> have been exterminated in South Africa. This did not happen to make room for cattle & game, but was started by the Boers & completed by British, Scallywags, and armed natives - the latter obtaining their weapons in payment for their assistance in the scramble for diamonds & gold. These same conditions, with greater facilities and government support are spreading north & will take a much shorter time to complete.

Some of Dr. Davey's meat starved natives might be able to get an inferior meat ration for a time, if they could be persuaded to eat 25% or more of their surplus cattle, thus relieving the crooked areas and reducing their herds of the large percentage of old, unacculturated mummified cows.

Mr. Moore may have his doubts on the soundness of the advice given to the Southern Rhodesian government by the Cattle Director of Research. It was certainly met with complete failure in Zululand. Where during the last few months 15,000 head of cattle have died from Nagana - Game has been thoroughly shot out during the last ten years in Trekkie areas, & the Nagana is worse than ever - The South African Agricultural Department has had some success with dusting with D.D.T., & they hope that this may save the game from bullets, as well as cattle from Nagana - Nagana has spread to sweeping through Northern Zululand where it has already spread

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into Swaziland.

W. Chorley states that brush clearing is more expensive than game extermination. Yet it is a fact that brush clearing is the one method which so far has proved successful.

D.D.T. may prove to be a second.

The research workers on Malaria never put

forward any suggestions of destroying Homo

Sapiens with the object of controlling the Anopheles.

The present policy, far from being the cheapest method, will prove to be the most costly failure. The absence of game, the presence of fly will be an everlasting black record of our inefficiency and short-sightedness.

Can not the Society for the preservation of the fauna of the Empire take the matter in hand before it is too late? If all thinking people can be informed of the facts and these bureaucratic actions discontinued it is quite possible that public opinion might be aroused sufficiently to demand an immediate cessation of hostilities against Africa's beautiful and unique fauna.



## Appendix E

## An account of life in Sudan

Audas dictated this account of his time in Sudan only seven weeks before his death. The handwriting is that of his sister, Dorothy Holtby (her grandson Simon Robinson recognised the script). The typescript appears to have been prepared later by the Durham Archives. The account is especially interesting because, although it was produced in 1965, it reflects the attitudes of British personnel who served in Sudan in the first half of the twentieth century.

The document is also available as: SAD.455/2/1-5 1965 Nov 14 (Short note on his Sudan service by Audas, dictated to his sister shortly prior to his death (1965)). Durham: Durham University Library, Archives and Special Collections: Sudan Archive, n.d.; typescript.

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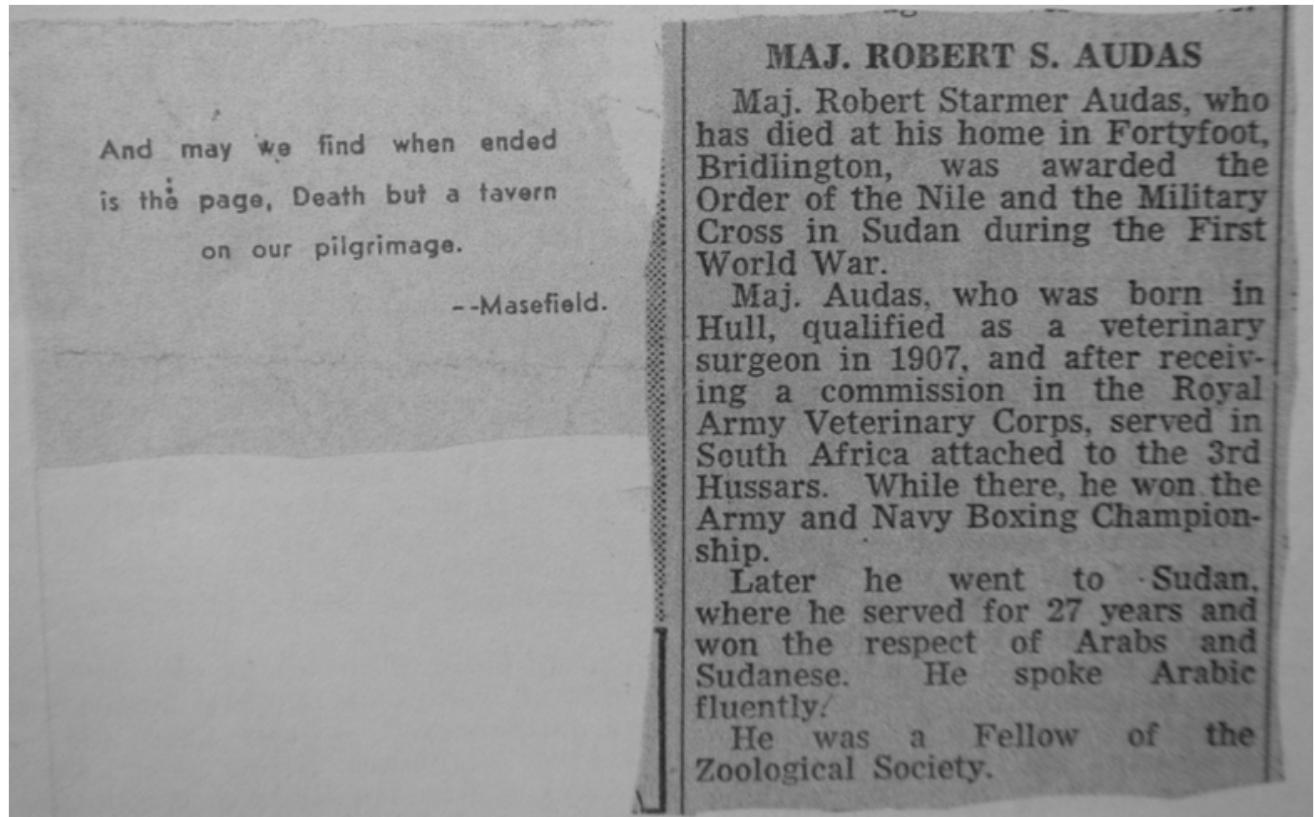
My duty in the Sudan commenced in 1909 when I left Roberts Heights in the Transvaal, & reported at Khartoum - I was then sent to El Geid in the province of Kordofan where I took over my Veterinary duties with the Camel Corp. The railway then was Khartoum north. Its terminus. & from there all transport was by Mule Steamers, Camels, Horses & donkeys. The Province of Kordofan is about the size of France & there were only about 40 British Officials - the Natives were chiefly Arabs of friendly disposition & mainly cattle & camel owners. My work was to try & improve the health & conditions of the native's stock, control diseases etc. This often took one hundred's of miles visiting tribal areas - I first had to arrange transport for myself & staff this consisted of 8 good camels, 2 horses

## Appendix F

### Obituaries

These two obituaries provide an insight into the life and character of Audas. The first is from a Bridlington newspaper and wrongly "promotes" him to Major. The second is from the Newsletter of the Anglican Diocese of Khartoum. The writer, J.A.G., was J Angus Gillan, a contemporary of Audas. Gillan was in the Sudan Political Service, joining in 1909 and retiring in 1939. He worked his way up the ranks, was Assistant Political and Intelligence Officer with the Western Frontier Force in the actions against Ali Dinar in 1916 and eventually became Civil Secretary (i.e. Head of the Political Service).

These obituaries were provided by Simon Robinson.



1966  
the congregation for many years must have remembered the lonely figure sitting in the last row of chairs at the West End—never missing Evensong, and joining us afterwards at Supper Club. Latterly he came to lunch almost every Sunday at the Clergy House and his quiet whimsical humour always gladdened our hearts.

He had a great knowledge of British and French literature and was quite an authority on Dickens, whom he could quote at length. He was a good man, and we missed him sadly when he left the country.

One of our great pleasures last leave was a visit he paid with Uncle to our cottage which provoked many pleasant reminiscences. His quietly efficient spirit was his great Christian possession. We extend to his family our deepest sympathy.

#### Dr. Ernest Percival Pratt

*Sir Eric Pridis writes:*

Dr. Pratt's death willadden his British and Sudanese friends in this country and in the Sudan. Percy Pratt, as he was known to his friends, studied medicine at Durham and St. George's Hospital where he held hospital appointments. He was selected for the Sudan Medical Service in 1927 and became a Medical Inspector commanding a career of 10 years devoted service to the Sudan.

After a long period in the Provinces, where he held many responsible posts and gained wide experience of Sudan medical problems and its people in all parts of the country, he became Director of the Sudan Medical Service and at the same time President of the Central Board of Public Health, and Chairman of the School Council of the Kitchener School of Medicine. After retiring from the service he was appointed Consulting Physician to the Sudan Government in London. He finally severed his official connection with the Sudan Government in 1957 thirty years after he joined the Sudan Medical Service.

Percy Pratt was exceptionally fitted by nature and professional aptitude for service in tropical Africa. His calm equable temperament, even under the most trying conditions, combined with exceptional professional ability inspiring confidence in his patients, and his deep consideration and humanity for those under his medical care and those working under his direction, embodied all that is best in our race and the virtues most appreciated in the Sudan. He gained the esteem and respect not only of his patients but that of all races who knew him. He had a marked sense of duty and always insisted on the highest standards possible. His cheerfulness and courage during his long last illness were an inspiration to his friends who visited him.

While in the Sudan he took a special interest

in its health problems and made a study of Typhus fever. During his service in the Sudan he was Awarded the Order of the Nile. Our deep sympathy will go out to his wife and children.

#### Major R. A. Audas, M.C.

To later British generations in the Sudan Sturmer Audas is probably remembered, or his reputation has been handed down, as something of a "character" and as an intrepid big game hunter. Both caps fit well enough, but to those of us, particularly "westerners", who knew him well there was a great deal more to him. A real lover and student of animal life, wild or tame; a dashing horseman and a brilliant horse master; a fine shot with gun or rifle, and a warm-hearted, if often blunt spoken, colleague, he was the ideal veterinary officer for the needs of an unspoilt semi-tribal area. His Arabic, if not always grammatical, was fluent and voluble. He demanded and received the understanding attention of *zaga* or "zal salik", of *buggari* or camel nomad, and he had a wonderful fund of local catch words to suit every occasion.

A typical Yorkshirer, he was no respecter of persons and his criticisms could be sulphurous to a degree. But there was a twinkle in his eye and his defamation would end in a chuckle—except when it was levelled against any form of sham or deception. Those of us who travelled with him, who had the fortune to see Sturmer in action, whether in the congenial atmosphere of an Abu Zabah horse show and duck shoot, or in the rough and tumble of a tribal disturbance in the early days of amateur Darfur, will always remember him as a good companion, a staunch friend, "a man for all seasons" who really mattered in our lives.

It seems a sad irony that one of the fittest and healthiest men whom one has known should have to spend the last several years of his life as a semi-invalid and the last two years as practically blind. When he became unable for more active hobbies and until his sight almost completely failed he found much consolation in carpentering and carving a large stock of "gambil" which he had brought back with him; and some of us will always remember the delicate pen and ink sketches of animals which he sent us as Christmas cards with an appropriate transliterated Arabic salutation. The Sudan was always uppermost in his thoughts. I remember some years ago getting a letter saying what a joy it had been to him that two old Sudanese friends on a tour in England had found their way to Bridlington to greet him. I think he must be happy to know that his devoted sister made sure that mingled in the soil which covers his earthly body is his collection of coloured pebbles from Jebel Marra.

J.A.G.